

we received during today's consideration of amendments to H.R. 4939, the emergency supplemental appropriations bill. We have taken up a lot of amendments to the bill, and we have heard a lot of debate. We know this will continue probably on into next week before we complete action on the bill. But we look forward to considering any suggestions that Senators have for improving the legislation. We would just as soon they did not spend a lot of time finding ways to improve the bill. But we think we made good progress today.

We thank all Senators and especially Senator MURRAY for her help in managing the bill today. Senator BYRD, the ranking Democrat, the senior Democrat, on the committee, has been a friend for a long time, and I have appreciated his help and counsel and advice and assistance as well.

I know of nothing further to come before the Senate, so we will await the advice of the leader before any further action is taken.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, Florida was hit by four hurricanes in 2005, a devastating year for killer storms. Starting with Delmis in July, followed by Katrina in August, Rita in September, and finishing with Wilma in October, when the hurricane season finally ended, 39 of Florida's 67 counties had been declared Federal disaster areas. In the aftermath, 40,000 roofs were repaired by the Army Corps; "Blue Roof" program and approximately 3,000 temporary trailers were used as housing for Floridians left homeless by the storms.

While I am emely appreciative of the assistance extended to Florida by this body, today I joined Senators CORNYN and HUTCHISON of Texas and Senator LANDRIEU of Louisiana on an amendment to H.R. 4939, the supplemental appropriations bill, which ensures no State will receive an allocation of less than 3.5 percent of the \$5.2 billion included in this bill for disaster Community Development Block Grant funds. This is extremely important to the panhandle of Florida because the last supplemental appropriation bill of fiscal year 2006 did not include Hurricane Dennis.

After Dennis made landfall, 27 percent or over 12,000 homes were damaged in Santa Rosa County the same region decimated by Hurricane Ivan in 2004, Escambia County suffered \$73.8 million in damages from Dennis. Franklin County's oyster beds and processing plant were nearly destroyed. Parts of Wakulla County were left under water by storm surges of more than 10 feet. I have not forgotten Dennis' victims and want them to know I am fighting for them.

South Florida will also benefit greatly from additional CDBG dollars. With total insured losses of \$8 billion, Wilma is ranked the second most expensive hurricane among the eight to strike Florida during 2004 and 2005.

I thank the committee for crafting language in the bill we are now consid-

ering which would make communities impacted by Dennis eligible for relief. Further, I note the House did not include similar language and urge my colleagues in the Florida delegation to fight to keep the Senate provision intact during conference.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I wish to take a moment this afternoon and discuss this supplemental and the need to restore some fiscal responsibility to this body. America has had some big challenges thrown at it over the last 5 years 9/11, the war on terror, and Hurricane Katrina and those challenges have required some commitment from the Federal Treasury. I accept that. But Congress can not continue to spend without restraint, and this administration can not continue to rely on the use of emergency supplementals to circumvent the congressional budget process.

When the President sent his budget request for fiscal year 2007 up to Congress, the administration indicated that Congress should expect some emergency supplemental requests as well. On February 16, the administration asked for \$92.2 billion in emergency funding for the war on terror and hurricane recovery. I think we need to ask some tough questions about budget processes and emergency funding requests. Do all of these dollars truly belong outside the normal budget and appropriations debate? I support the war on terror, and I am sympathetic to the devastation caused by the hurricanes, but neither of those events justifies a blank check from Congress.

The President has asked for \$92.2 billion, and I think that—at a minimum—we need to work our way back to that number in conference. We need to take a careful look at all of the President's requests, as well as the priorities that other Senators have, and make a decision as to whether these provisions are truly emergency needs.

I realize that some of my colleagues might take exception to these comments, since I have pushed for agricultural disaster assistance. I believe the most important component of that package is the energy assistance payments, to help farmers manage unprecedented increases in the cost of fuel and fertilizer price increases that were caused in large part by the hurricanes. Congress has been generous in addressing gulf coast recovery, but we cannot address some of the impact while leaving others to absorb the full impact of an unforeseeable disaster. Producers have waited and waited, watching one supplemental after another go by without their legitimate concerns being addressed.

Budgets are about priorities—allocating the right amount of money to the right places at the right time for the right reasons. We have limited resources, and we need to allocate them wisely. I am confident that, working in good faith with our colleagues in the House and the administration, we can bring the overall dollar figure down,

while still addressing the truly pressing needs that are out there.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I had hoped we could have made further progress on the emergency supplemental bill. Unfortunately, today we were only able to dispose of two amendments with rollcall votes—only two amendments. I am disappointed that the Senator from Oregon prevented us from voting on some of the amendments that had been in the queue, in line, and ready for votes.

Having said that, we know this is an emergency bill, supplemental emergency spending. Time is of the essence. Tomorrow there is a retreat on the other side of the aisle, and therefore we will not be able to make further progress. For that reason, I will send a cloture motion to the desk to ensure we can finish this emergency bill at a reasonable time next week.

CLOTURE MOTION

I now send that cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 391, H.R. 4939, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006.

Bill Frist, Thad Cochran, Judd Gregg, Lamar Alexander, Wayne Allard, Johnny Isakson, Mitch McConnell, Mel Martinez, Orrin Hatch, Kay Bailey Hutchison, George Allen, Norm Coleman, Pat Roberts, Richard Shelby, Larry Craig, Richard Burr, Robert F. Bennett.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the live quorum be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING CRAIG WILLIAMS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate a distinguished Kentuckian who has been honored with a very distinguished award. I

understand that philanthropist Richard Goldman got the inspiration for the Goldman Environmental Prize after reading about the winners of the Nobel Prize, and wondering why there was no equivalent for extraordinary efforts to conserve our natural environment.

Now, less than two decades since its inception, the Goldman Environmental Prize has risen to rival the Nobel as a marker of achievement. Every one of this year's winners fought to protect the environment in a way that affected the lives of thousands, if not millions, of others, often alone and at great personal cost. All of them have my admiration. And I am grateful the Goldman Environmental Prize will continue to recognize and reward conservationists who protect the land, and promote the well-being of the people who use it.

All of that said, I speak today for one reason. Craig Williams has been a friend for over 20 years, and an inspiration. Craig won this award because he dared to speak out against an immovable, hidebound bureaucracy—the Department of Defense—and he won. He is proof that, sometimes, David really can slay Goliath. This year, he has been honored as the North American recipient of the Goldman Environmental Prize.

For 20 years, Craig's vigilance has proven invaluable in ongoing efforts to ensure the Department of Defense destroys its hundreds of tons of chemical weapons as safely and efficiently as possible. These deadly materials are stored at Blue Grass Army Depot, which is near Craig's home in Berea, KY, and at several other locations across the United States. Thanks to his activism, we are closer than we ever have been to taking tangible steps towards removing these heinous weapons from the face of the Earth once and for all.

Craig's biggest fans are his neighbors, the people of Madison County, KY. To them, Craig is an absolute hero. Imagine if you lived just a short distance away from over 500 tons of the deadliest materials ever conceived by man, VX nerve agent. As little as 10 milligrams of VX will kill a human being. That is about the mass of 10 grains of sand. If inhaled, death is immediate.

Too many people have lived for too long with that mortal threat hanging over them. Thanks to Craig, they can see light at the end of the tunnel.

Obviously, Craig is very effective. But let me explain why he is so effective. First of all, he is tenacious. After 20 years of commitment to this cause—with little or no pay or recognition—he and the nationwide group of concerned citizens he founded, the Chemical Weapons Working Group, are more active than ever.

A lot of people come to Congress every day with dire warnings about this or that issue. And a lot of them turn out to be Chicken Littles, warning about a sky that never falls. Craig is

no Chicken Little. He is credible, because he knows what he is talking about. I listen to Craig, as do my Senate colleagues, because he is so often right.

The work Craig and I have done together is a perfect model for how government can and ought to work with the people it serves. Too often, collaboration between lawmakers and informed citizens—also known as lobbyists, please excuse my language, I know that is a dirty word—is portrayed as unethical or sleazy.

The truth is that the vast majority of people who come to Congress for help are people like Craig Williams. They have a lot of passion, a lot of knowledge, and want to persuade the government to use its power for their cause.

Craig's cause is just, and his advocacy is persuasive. When Craig tells me something, I know it is worthy of consideration, and I will be inclined to move the levers of government to get the results he and I want. For 20 years I have been happy to do just that. Government works because of people like Craig Williams.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Craig Williams on this well-deserved honor.

A TRIBUTE TO THE NEPALI PEOPLE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to speak briefly about recent events in Nepal.

As Senators are aware, last February 1 King Gyanendra seized absolute power, dissolved the multiparty government, and imprisoned his political opponents. He justified his power grab as necessary to bring peace and democracy to that impoverished Himalayan nation that has been in the throes of a bloody conflict with Maoist insurgents for a decade.

Yet, as many predicted, in the past year the Maoists have gained strength while Nepal's fledgling democratic institutions have been badly weakened. Finally recognizing that the King's real purpose was to consolidate his own power and take the country back to the feudal days of his father, the people lost patience.

Over the past few weeks, hundreds of thousands of Nepali citizens took to the streets in a show of defiance and braved bullets, clubs, and tear gas to force the King to back down.

Tomorrow, Nepal's Parliament will reconvene and it is expected to begin discussion of a date for the election of a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution. Among the key issues to be addressed is what role, if any, the monarchy will have in Nepal's democratic future. Another necessary step will be to guarantee the army's subordination to civilian authority.

I wish to pay tribute to the people of Nepal. They have suffered for generations from poverty, discrimination, corruption, and repression. Yet through it all they have persevered,

and they have shown that not even the most recalcitrant despot who uses the national army as his own palace guard can withstand the will of the people when they are prepared to risk their lives for freedom.

Today, Nepal begins a new chapter in its history. The future is far from certain and the road ahead is filled with potential pitfalls. But no one can doubt the opportunity that this moment offers, nor the importance of what is at stake for Nepal.

It is up to Nepal's political parties, whose leaders have too often put their own personal ambitions ahead of the good of the country, to show that they have a practical vision for the future and that they can govern. In a democracy that means dialogue, it means tolerance, it means compromise, it means acting in good faith as representatives of the people, it means keeping one's commitments, and it means being willing to step aside for the next generation when it is their turn.

The Maoists must also recognize that the Nepali people's foremost desire is peace. The Maoists have announced another cease-fire, which is welcome, but there is no justification for any return to violence. Too many innocent people have died and too many Nepali families have suffered needlessly. It is time for the Maoists to renounce violence and join in a national dialogue to restore democracy and develop a strategy to address the root causes of the conflict.

The international community, particularly India, the United States, Great Britain, China, and the United Nations, also have an important role to play in supporting Nepal at this critical time. Like Afghanistan, East Timor, and other unstable countries emerging from years of conflict, Nepal will need technical assistance for the election of a constituent assembly and the drafting of a new constitution. It will need international monitors of the cease-fire and of the observance of human rights by both Maoists and the army. It will need resources to help build the institutions of democracy and to hold accountable those on both sides of the conflict who are responsible for atrocities.

During the 5 years of his troubled rein, King Gyanendra took Nepal to the brink of disaster. He stubbornly ignored the pleas of Nepal's friends. He shamelessly used the army to trample on the people's cherished rights. He squandered his opportunity to continue on the path of his predecessor to nurture democracy and help guide Nepal into the 21st century.

The Nepali people, 15 of whom gave their lives in the protests, want nothing less than a democratic future. They want a government that respects the worth of every Nepali, regardless of the family they come from, their ethnicity, religion, gender or profession. It is time for Nepal's leaders to show that they are worthy of the Nepali people's confidence and support.